

**Abstract of the Disclosure**

5 A latch-release apparatus for use with a fifth-wheel hitch mechanism has a first rigid metal bar having a first end, a second end, and an outside diameter, a metal ring having an inside diameter greater than the outside diameter of the metal bar, surrounding the rigid bar, contacting and welded to the rigid bar between the first and second ends, leaving an open region on a side of the metal bar opposite the weld, and a rigid metal hooking rod having a first and a second end, attached by a bent loop on the first end  
10 through the open region of the ring welded to the rigid bar, the hooking rod having a bent hook at the second end away from the attachment to the ring welded to the rigid bar, the bent hook for engaging a fifth-wheel release handle.